



EL CLARIN

ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey
Update

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21st ANNUAL LUNCHEON TO BE HELD THURSDAY, MARCH 12, 1998

EVENT TO CELEBRATE ASPIRA'S AND ALUMNI'S SUCCESSES

Hundreds of education, business and government leaders are expected to gather at the Holiday Inn Jetport in Elizabeth to celebrate ASPIRA's 21st Annual Luncheon.

The Board of Directors has chosen "Alumni Advocacy Empowers ASPIRA's Community" as the theme for this year's luncheon. Tickets for the event are \$50.00 each, and should be purchased in advance.

"ASPIRA has a long track record of success in motivating our Latino youth to stay in school and attain a post secondary education. The upcoming luncheon will help us celebrate that success, and also provide us with an opportunity to thank the many people who make this possible year after year," said William Colón, Executive Director.

Alumni who have distinguished themselves in all fields of endeavor will be recognized for their contributions to society.

All proceeds from the luncheon will benefit the Puerto Rican/Latino youth served by ASPIRA. Tickets to the luncheon are available by calling Ms. Carmen Nazario at (973) 484-7554.

MONEY MAGAZINE RANKS ASPIRA NUMBER 2 IN NATIONWIDE SURVEY

In an article published in the "Forecast" issue of January, 1998 the internationally renowned **MONEY** magazine ranked **ASPIRA** as the #2 charity in the United States.

The rating is based on how nonprofit spend donated dollars.

Daniel Borochoff, President of the American Institute of Philanthropy, and author of the study, uses certain parameters to rate the nonprofit. He considers the entire cost of direct mail a fund-raising expense, although charities can count some as program cost," explains the **MONEY** article.

Mr. Borochoff assigns A's to F's based on three financial measures—programs, such as; spending, fund-raising efficiency and size of reserves. We take pride in informing that **ASPIRA** rated an **A+**.

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☎ BELL ATLANTIC LAUNCHES "COMMUNITY THREADS" ☎

Bell Atlantic affirms their support for education and the Hispanic Community through their Community Threads Program. Bell Atlantic initiated its "Community Threads" Program by presenting ASPIRA and La Casa de Don Pedro of New Jersey with a \$5,000 check each. The community based agencies benefit as New Jersey Bell Atlantic customers enroll in the program.

By signing up for Community Threads, Bell Atlantic donates to ASPIRA and to La Casa de Don Pedro, an amount equal to one half of one percent of the Bell Atlantic customer's residential bill. There is no cost to the customer and no change in the Bell Atlantic phone service.

Those ASPIRA supporters who wish to join must call 1-800-334-4492 and sign up for the program.

CAMDEN CENTER HONORS ALFREDO SANTIAGO

The ASPIRA, Inc. of NJ Camden Center, has been renamed the, Alfredo Santiago ASPIRA center in memory of a beloved ASPIRANTE who was tragically taken from us in a car accident in 1996. Alfredo Santiago was a product of the ASPIRA process. A native of Jersey City, Alfredo became an ASPIRANTE while attending Ferris High School in Jersey City. As an adult he moved to South Jersey where he continued to preform as an outstanding ASPIRANTE. Observing the needs of the Puerto Rican/Latino youth in the city of Camden, Alfredo persuaded the Camden City officials and the community leaders to support an ASPIRA program to promote positive impact in the lives of these youths.

Since its inception in 1987, the ASPIRA Camden Center has provided the Puerto Rican/Latino youth with academic support, leadership development and community activism. We are eternally grateful for his insight and commitment. *Muchísimas Gracias "Alfie"!*

NEW PROGRAM IN CAMDEN CENTER

As part of a collaborative effort to reduce violence among the Camden youth, **ASPIRA Inc. of NJ** has entered into a partnership with the Abriendo Nuevos Caminos Peacemaker Project. This project, funded by the William Penn Foundation, enables **ASPIRA** to develop a violence prevention and peace education curriculum geared towards the youth of North Camden. The Initiative, Commitment and Empowerment Prevention Program, is designed to assist youth in making healthy choices, manage conflict well and appreciate diversity. The youth can focus on their development as individuals and acknowledge their responsibility toward their community. To reach this outcome, the curriculum focuses on **ASPIRA's 3-A Plan** Awareness, Analyses and Action.

The training sessions began in mid-November and will continue until September of the year 2000. It is expected that one hundred youth complete the I.C.E. training sessions over this time. At the end of the program, youth mentors will be identified to serve as leaders within their community and schools. These identified leaders will take an active role in improving the quality of life in North Camden through community service projects which will include food and clothes drives as well as dissemination of information and public presentations.

For further information regarding the I.C.E. Posse, please contact Noheini Andújar, Youth Facilitator, in the Camden ASPIRA Center, (609) 964-9115.

IN SEARCH OF...

ASPIRA, INC. OF NEW JERSEY is trying to identify and locate its alumni. If you are or know of a former **ASPIRANTE**, please contact and inform us.

The **ASPIRANTES** of today need to know of the **ASPIRANTES** of yesterday.

Please call **ASPIRA'S** Executive Office at (973) 484-7554. Ask for Carmen Nazario.

WE ARE LOOKING FOR A FEW GENEROUS COMPANIES TO JOIN THE 300 CLUB

Summit Bank of New Jersey is the first corporate partner to join **ASPIRA'S 300 Club**.

The 300 Club is composed of members who wish to join the **ASPIRA** family by making an annual contribution of, \$3,300. This contribution will support **ASPIRA's** efforts in the drop out prevention, leadership programs, as well as parent involvement and special purpose programs, such as the Math and Science Academy.

The following services are extended to the participating club members.

Networking sessions, sponsorships (Education Expo) and corporate recognition events are among the benefits extended to the 300 club members.

We are extending an invitation to corporate partners (300) who are willing to make this special commitment for the 1998-99 year.

For further information, call Mr. Colón at (973) 484-7554.

PUERTO RICO TRIP FOR ASPIRANTES THIS SUMMER

For the past two years ASPIRA Inc. of New Jersey has been part of the "Nuestra Herencia, Nuestro Futuro, Nuestras Vidas" Conference, sponsored by the Monmouth County Prosecutor's Office and the State Division of Highway Traffic Safety. While planning for the conference in the spring of 1997, the program coordinator, Ms. Joan Spinelli, informed us of an opportunity for fifteen Latino youth from New Jersey to visit the island of Puerto Rico for a week in the summer of 1998. Youth involved with the Alliance for a Drug-free Puerto Rico would host the NJ participants at Sacred Heart University. This experience will provide the youth from the mainland greater awareness of their cultural heritage, as well as allowing them to familiarize the Puerto Rican youth with the reality of a Puerto Rican growing up on the mainland.

The criteria for selection was based on an application and an essay from each candidate. The essay consisted of the expectations of each individual from this cultural exchange as well as their contribution to the same. Nine **ASPIRANTES** from across the state were selected. They will be traveling to Puerto Rico from July 13th to July 17th. While on the island they will participate in a series of educational and cultural workshops, visit the San Juan metropolitan area, the Roberto Clemente Sports City and the city of Ponce.

Congratulations to: Angelic Suarez-Camden H.S., Selena Rivera-Camden H.S., Melissa Rivera-Camden H.S., Amy Diaz-Camden H.S., Jorge Pagon-Camden H.S., Jorge Perez-Trenton Central H.S., Shaolin Matos-Barringer H.S., Alfredo Gonzalez-Barringer H.S. and Melissa Miranda-Ferris H.S.

ABBOTT DECISION TO HAVE IMMEDIATE IMPACT ON EDUCATION

The recent decision by Judge King in the Abbott case will have immediate impact on how education is funded in New Jersey and how well urban school districts will fare in the near future.

Basically, Judge King has ruled that the "thorough and efficient" clause in the New Jersey Constitution means that there must exist parity and financial equality in the education of all children in New Jersey. Therefore, per pupil expenditures must be equalized in all school districts. Furthermore, there has to be supplemental expenditures in the urban, poor districts to bring those school systems "up to par" with the richer districts.

The Education Law Center, the Newark-based community group which initiated the lawsuit, has recommended remedies which amount to an extra expenditure of over \$300 million dollars for new and supportive educational programs, while Governor Whitman's administration has proposed a budget with \$190 million in additional funds.

ASPIRA's programs in Newark, Paterson, Jersey City, Trenton and Camden should be used as models by those districts as well as the other 20 plus special-needs districts, slated to receive extra funds.

The parental involvement program (APEX), the leadership development and ASPIRA clubs, as well as the Math and Science Academy are some of the programs ready for replication in all districts willing to invest in proven, successful methods to motivate our in-school youth.

ASPIRA TO RUN MATH AND SCIENCE ACADEMY

A \$20,000 seed grant has been approved by the National ASPIRA office to support the creation of Math and Science academies in New Jersey. The funds were granted to the national office by the Carnegie Foundation.

The MAS (for "more" in Spanish) academy provides a mentoring and tutorial program in math, science and technology for middle school (6th, 7th and 8th graders) students. The program in New Jersey will focus on assisting Latino female students.

During the school year, selected students are tutored in math and science by senior level college undergraduate students. They will visit science and technology sites, such as Liberty Science Center, The New York Hall of Science and the Panasonic Lab. They will also visit actual research and lab facilities in the corporate world. There is a parental involvement module which prepares parents to assist their children with math and science work.

In addition to the year-round tutorial support, the academy culminates in a four-week summer program which will be conducted at college facilities. ASPIRA staff are already negotiating with the New Jersey Institute of Technology (NJIT), Rutgers University and Jersey City State College to be the summer host for the academy.

"We do hope to secure the full support of local school districts who should take advantage of this unique initiative", stated William Colon, Executive Director. School districts must "buy-in" to participate in the academy. There is a cost of \$1750 per student which is not covered by grants and districts must be willing to provide services to a cluster of 20 students at a time.

For further information regarding the MAS Academy, please contact Mr. Colon at (973) 484-7354.

ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey
Board of Directors

Noemi Velázquez
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Carlos J. Alma
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Hector Ortiz
Rolando Velazquez

William Colón
Executive Director

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WELCOME!
NEW
STAFFMEMBERS

ASPIRA's growing family now includes:

Celia Then, Receptionist
Jose Miguel Malave, Maintenance
Norma Rivera, APEX Counselor
Cristina R. Jacques, APEX Counselor
Dolores G. Del Pilar, APEX Counselor

ASPIRA/AmeriCorps:

Carmen Torres-Izquierdo, Program
Director
Donna Tollinchi, Site Coordinator

AmeriCorps Members:

Joseph S. Garrahan
Donna Morrison
Caridad Jimenez
Gamaliel Guardia
Stacey Ann
Terecia Montero

NEWARK DISTRICT SUPPORTS
AMERICORPS

"Congratulations! On behalf of the Newark Public Schools it is a pleasure for me to notify you that your agency has been awarded the amount of \$18,000 as our district's 1997-98 contribution to your local cash match for the ASPIRA AmeriCorps Program."

So reads a letter directed to Mr. William Colon, Executive Director, from Dr. Beverly Hall, State Superintendent of Schools for the Newark school district. This is indeed great news. This support makes possible the continuation of the AmeriCorps Program in the Newark schools. The ASPIRA family is very grateful that the local school district is extending their support and partnership. We commend Dr. Hall and Mr. Armando Medina, of her staff, for their clear vision.

The ASPIRA/AmeriCorps Community Service program, is an eleven month school-based project, partially funded by the National Service Corporation. This project trains and places corps members in predominantly Hispanic urban middle and high schools.

The objectives of the program are: to increase the academic success and increase leadership development of Latino youth and their families, to promote community volunteerism and partnerships, and to increase training, skills and educational opportunity of corps members.

In exchange for their volunteer work, corps members receive a modest living allowance and an educational award of \$4,725 to help pay for college, graduate school or payment of student loan.

JERSEY CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS FUND APEX PROGRAM

ASPIRA, Inc. of New Jersey has been granted \$44,000 from the Jersey City Public School District. These funds are allocated to provide Parent counselors at eleven schools in Jersey City. The counselors will recruit and train approximately 300 parents during the Spring of 1998. This project will run through June 15, 1998.

The ASPIRA Parent for Education Excellence (APEX) was originally funded via a grant from the Readers Digest Foundation through ASPIRA's national office. The original grant still supports the program in Newark. Jersey City parents will be the recipient of APEX's services which include workshops in the following areas: Self-esteem; the importance of education; the home connection; school structure in New Jersey; the meaning of parental involvement; the importance of communication; your involvement in the schools; organizing parent networks; group dynamics; the effective facilitator.

The workshops are offered in English and in Spanish.

Upon completion of the program, parents will be able to apply what they have learned and communicate the needs of their children more effectively. They will become active participants in already existing parent groups, be able to provide more assistance to their children with school work and activities as well as interact with school personnel.